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THE POLAR SEAS AND SIR JOHN FRANKLIN.

Insuetum per lter gelidas enavit ad Arctos.

SINCE the zealous attempts to recover the Holy Sepulchre, in the middle ages, the Christian world has not been so unanimously agreed on any thing as in the desire to recover Sir John Franklin, dead or alive, from the dread solitudes of death into which he has so fearlessly ventured. Near a score of ships have been sent, at a vast expense, from the two hemispheres, to explore and follow his traces, and satisfy, with whatever results, the universal interest in his fate; and the efforts of the English and Americans are as yet undissuaded by the failure of so many researches. Hearts of oak are still beating hopefully on that Northern quest, and signal guns are still heard booming round the gates of the indistinct and awful Polynya. The history of progress in the direction of the North-West or North-East Passage leaves no doubt at all that, as a sea-route across the world, it is not to be thought of; and that, even if a fortunately daring expedition should succeed in threading its way through the treacherous and hummocky labyrinths of the Polar Sea, nothing but the geographical theory would be the better for it. For all purposes of commerce or intercourse, in fact, the Croker Mountains that Sir John Ross saw, mirageously, one evening after dinner, in 1819, might in reality lie across the opening of Lancaster Sound, tracing "No Thoroughfare" along the formidable and repulsive horizon. Much has been said of the open sea round the Pole; but supposing it exists—and there is no reason to doubt it does—it is a place guarded against navigation by a circle of floes, hummocks, icebergs and so forth, eternally shifting, grinding, groaning and howling, and thus making all exits and entrances matters of desperate uncertainty.

From the first discovery of Northern America by Cabot, the Arctic passage engaged the attention of geographers and pilots who dreamed evermore of a short cut to India—

To Agra and Lahor of Great Mogul,
Down to the Golden Chersonese—

an achievement which, first and last, drew on the adventurous energies of Columbus

in another direction. The progress of Arctic discovery has always been attended by fatalities. The Portuguese brothers, Cortereal, in the beginning of the sixteenth century, passed away from the sight of men into the hyperborean latitudes, whence they returned no more. About half a century later, Sir Hugh Wilbroughby, looking for China beyond the coast of Labrador, perished with his crews; and his frozen body was found, some years after, by Russian or Eskimo fishermen, with the journal of his voyage crumpling by his side. Thirty years subsequently, Sir Humphrey Gilbert, proceeding to enter the Northern pass, went down off the coast of Newfoundland. Hudson perished among the icebergs in 1610; and now the world is leaning reluctantly to the opinion that the names of Franklin, Fitzjames, and Crozier must be added to this dreary roll of Polar catastrophes.

For a long time after Baffin, Frobisher and Hudson, the map of Arctic America received no new names or delineations. In 1741, Behring, the Russian, discovered the straits that bear his name. In 1771, Hearne, a servant of the Hudson's Bay Company, was the first who saw the Polar Sea flowing round this continent. In 1773, Captain Phipps with the *Seahorse* and *Carcass*, made some explorations in the North. Then came the great wars, in which a little lad who went with Phipps among the icebergs—Horatio Nelson—bore so famous a part, and, for over forty years, the scientific curiosity of man was absorbed in the thunder of the captains and the shouting that agitated the warmer seas of the world. It was not till a few years after the general peace, that Capt. John Ross renewed those more recent explorations which, within living memory, have been pretty continuously followed ever since, and which may be briefly alluded to before speaking of Sir John Franklin's last expedition and those set on foot for his rescue.

In 1818, Captain Ross proceeded to the North, with the ships *Isabella* and the *Alexander*, having under his command James C. Ross, his nephew, W. E. Perry,

and Edward Belcher—men who subsequently distinguished themselves in Polar voyages of discovery. Ross proceeded through Davis' Straits into Baffin's Bay, and reached Lancaster Sound, from which place he returned to England with the information that he saw a range of mountains, which he had named the Croker Mountains, stretching across that inlet and barring all progress to the West by that way. The voyage was a failure. In the same year, the ships *Dorothea* and *Trent*, under the orders of Capt. Buchan, with whom Lieut. Franklin acted as second in command, were sent to Behring's Straits. But the perils and difficulties of this expedition were more remarkable than the results of it, and the ships returned before the close of the year.

In 1819, Franklin, impressed by the discoveries of Hearne, Mackenzie and others, along the northern edge of this continent, undertook to trace the looked for passage, from the mouth of the Coppermine River, eastward, by the shore, towards the waters of Hudson's Bay. Proceeding from one of the forts of the Hudson's Bay Company, attended by Mr. Back and Dr. Richardson, since distinguished for their explorations, he traced the Coppermine to the ocean. Thence, his party, with their boats and sledges, journeyed along the coast, for 600 miles; till at last, having reached a point which they named Turnagain, and finding their provisions falling short, they quitted the sea and took up their march, of fifty days, along Hood's River towards Fort Enterprise. In September 1820, commenced the dreariest and most miserable of journeys. The expedition consisted of Franklin, Dr. Richardson, Mr. Hood a young officer, Mr. Back, Hepburn a sailor, ten Canadians with French names, and two Indians. The country was desolate, barren, and covered with snow. In a few days their pemmican failed and their chief resource was a sort of moss called *tripe de roche*. Though they succeeded in shooting a few animals, their sufferings from hunger and cold soon became dreadful, as they slowly made their way through snow-drifts and ravines, and over torrents, in the direction of Point Lake. Franklin fainted from exhaustion and want of food. Mr. Back, and three men were hurried in advance towards Fort Enterprise to hasten relief, while Franklin and the rest moved painfully on, at the rate of five or six miles a day. They were soon reduced to eat the leather of their old shoes and two Canadians dropped down and perished in the snow. Dr. Richardson, Hepburn, and Michel the Iroquois, remained with poor Mr. Hood under a tent, while Franklin and the rest

pushed on towards the Fort. When the latter reached it at last, after having left three more Canadians to perish in the track—they found it deserted and foodless, and, looking into each other's emaciated faces, burst into tears. Sending part of his men forward, Franklin was forced to stay at the fort, with three others, also unable to proceed—and he and they had no food but the soup of old bones picked up or dug from the ground. In a day or two they were joined by Richardson and Hepburn who informed him that Michel the Iroquois had assassinated Mr. Hood, and that the Doctor had shot him in turn. On the first of November, two Canadians died at the fort, and the survivors could not remove them. On the 7th, Indians came bringing provisions, and they were all saved, when nearly at the last gasp. Certainly Sir John Franklin did not proceed on his last voyage to the Polar seas, uninured to the dreariest and most perilous chances of that terrible region.

While Franklin was suffering in this overland expedition, Lieutenant Parry was making his most successful voyage. In May 1819, he proceeded with the *Hecla* and *Griper* to Lancaster Sound, where he proved the Croker Mountains to be as visionary as those of Hy Brasil off the north-west coast of Ireland, and, advancing through the strait which he named after Mr. Barrow, Secretary of the Admiralty, made the most pronounced discoveries of modern research in that region. He first saw and named Wellington Channel, Regent's Inlet, Bathurst's, Byam Martin's, Melville's and other islands, now called the Parry Islands. He also saw and defined Banks' Land in the southwestern distance. These places have ever since been the great landmarks of Northern research; no navigator has gone beyond them, and all subsequent discoveries have been made about them and with reference to them. Travelling over Byam Martin's Island, Parry's officers discovered remains of Eskimo huts, and traces of oxen, hares, reindeer and other creatures, proving that in the neighborhood of the Polynya there is no want or difficulty of animal existence. This voyage was a fortunate one in every respect. Parry ran rapidly in, made his discoveries, wintered, and came out again in the open season. His next voyage, in 1821, with the *Fury* and *Hecla*, was to the lower waters—those of Hudson's Bay; and he spent the winter of that year in Fox's Channel. He passed two winters in the North, and explored Melville's Peninsula. In 1823, Capt. Clavering conveyed Capt. Sabine to Spitzbergen and Greenland, to make experiments, determining the con-

figuration of the earth. Lyons proceeded in 1824, with the intention of examining Melville's Peninsula and going thence, if possible, to Franklin's Point Turnagain, on the American coast. But the expedition was so shaken about and distressed, that it was forced to return.

In the spring of 1824 Parry with the ships *Hecla* and *Fury*, made his third Northern voyage. He went into Barrow's Straits and wintered at Port Bowen, on Regent's Inlet. Next year he proceeded westward and examined the coast of North Somerset. Here, on the eastern shore of the Inlet, he was forced to leave the *Fury* and return home.

In 1826 Capt. Franklin went down the river Mackenzie and explored the coast to the westward, 374 miles. His party returned to England in October 1827. In 1826 Capt. Beechy sailed into the Pacific and entered Behring's Straits. But he made no eastward progress.

Parry undertook his fourth voyage in 1827. He went to Spitzbergen and leaving his ship proceeded with sledges, overland, towards the pole, which is about 600 miles from Hakluyt's Headland. But the attempt was fruitless. While he and his men were creeping up on boats and sledges, to between 82° and 83° beyond which none have ventured, the ice they were on was moving slowly to the South and their severe labor was all thrown away.

In 1829, Captain John Ross, who had suffered a good deal in reputation from the treacherous Croker Mountains, resolved to make another effort. As government would not encourage him, he was indebted for his outfit to Mr. Felix Booth, a London distiller, and subsequently a knight and lord mayor, who, in return for his liberality, has received an Arctic immortality—an enduring monument in icebergs—in those regions bearing the names Boothia, Felix, Lord Mayor, as the reader may see on glancing at the map. Indeed, he should do more than glance at it; for without it, any disquisition on the Northern discoveries will make but a confused impression on his memory. Captain Ross went into Barrow's Straits, and entered Regent's Inlet. He visited the land on the west coast, and called it Boothia. He wintered there, and, in 1831, his nephew, James C. Ross, planted the English flag on the magnetic pole, in latitude $70^{\circ} 17'$ north, and $96^{\circ} 46' 44''$ west longitude, where the dip of the needle was nearly vertical. In April, 1832, finding his ship, the *Victory*, could not be extricated from the ice, Ross left it, and journeyed to the *Fury* Beach for boats that were lying there. With these, after vast labor, he

tried to get out of Regent's Inlet; but he was obliged to give up the attempt, and retrace his steps to the wreck of the *Fury*, where he passed his fourth winter of 1832-3. In August, 1833, he made one more vigorous effort to get out, and, having passed in the boats through Barrow's Straits, he and his men were happily picked up, in Lancaster Sound, by the whaler, *Isabella*, the captain's old ship of discovery. The people of England believed Ross and his crew had perished, and, in the midst of their doubts and regrets, the nation was surprised and rejoiced by the news of his rescue. He has retrieved every thing, and the Croker Mountains were no longer remembered to his prejudice.

In 1833, Captain Back made a journey from the Hudson's Bay station to the Polar Sea. He went eastward beyond Franklin's Point, Turnagain, and traced the coast in the direction of Repulse Bay, a point within Hudson's waters. He returned in 1835, and sailed in 1836 up through Hudson's Straits, to try the chance of finding a way across the interval lying between his late land exploration on the west, and the bottom of Regent's Inlet. But the voyage was unsatisfactory. In 1836, Dease and Simpson went from a fort of the Hudson's Bay Company along the Mackenzie to the Arctic coasts, and examined the latter; but with no remarkable result. In 1845, other expeditions were set on foot. One was that of Dr. John Rae, who proceeded from Fort Churchill, on Hudson's Bay, in July, 1846, and, travelling arduously northward with boats and sledges, discovered Boothia to be a peninsula. The other expedition was that of Sir John Franklin.

From the foregoing, it will be perceived that, after the first voyage of Parry, all other progress was, so to speak, carried on within and below his extreme delineations. No one had ventured beyond Cape Walker in the direction of Banks' Land, to the west and south of North Somerset, or gone beyond Parry's Islands to the north-west, or to the north, through Wellington Channel. Neither had any attempt been made from Baffin's Bay, above Lancaster Sound, to enter those remote waters said to flow round the pole. And, indeed, it was no wonder that the explorers preferred the more known and southerly latitudes of Repulse Bay, Boothia, Coronation Gulf, and Victoria Land, to the remoter solitudes of the more northern ways; while, at the same time, the narrowed space between the extreme of continental exploration from the west, and the coasts of Regent's Inlet and Hudson's Bay, very

naturally led men to look for the passage in that direction.

Sir John Franklin was born at Spilsby, in Lincolnshire, in the year 1786. He entered the English navy in 1800 as midshipman. He served in the *Polyphemus*, and, as a middy on board, witnessed the battle of the Baltic before Copenhagen, where Nelson paid back the old Corsair compliments of Regnar Lodbrok. Young Franklin went afterwards with Captain Flinders on a voyage of discovery to the coasts of New Holland, and was shipwrecked on a coral reef in August, 1803. Sir John was early inured to those perils and privations which attended his course in life. He was signal-midshipman on board the *Bellerophon* in the sea-flight of Trafalgar in 1805, reading through the smoke the signs of battle as they flew from mast to mast. In 1808, Lieutenant Franklin escorted the expatriated Braganzas—flying before Junot and the other French generals—from the Tagus to the Rio Janeiro. Again, in 1814, he was with Packenham at New Orleans, trying to get at Jackson behind the immortal mud-parapets and sand-bags (no cotton packs among them—we have Andrew's word for it), and was wounded in the boat service while behaving spiritedly and well. In 1818, he commanded the *Trent*, and accompanied Buchan to the north. Next year he made that terrible overland journey to which we have briefly alluded. In 1825, he made another overland expedition towards the Polar Sea, leaving England in great depression of mind in consequence of his first wife's illness. This lady, daughter of Mr. Porden, architect, of London, died in less than a week after he had left England, carrying with him the flag she had given him to hoist on reaching the Polar Sea. He was obliged, by the imperfect success of the expedition, to hoist it on Garry's Island, at the mouth of the Mackenzie River. He has left narratives of these two overland expeditions. In 1827, he was presented by the Geographical Society of Paris with a gold medal worth \$250. In 1828, he married Jane, daughter of John Griffin, Esq., of London, and in 1829, Captain Franklin was knighted by George IV. He was actively employed in the Mediterranean during the war of Greek Independence, and received for his services the order of the Redeemer of Greece. Sir John, if now alive, is in his 67th year.

Franklin left England on the 26th May, 1845, with the *Erebus* and *Terror*—two ominously-named ships, which had been originally built for purposes of bombardment, and had only just returned from the Antarctic exploration under Sir James C.

Ross. Sir John was accompanied by Captain Fitzjames and Captain Crozier, and the squadron had a complement of 138 men. He was spoken by the whaler *Enterprise*, Captain Martin, in Baffin's Bay, on the 20th of July, and his ships were last seen on the 26th (fastened to an iceberg in Melville Bay) by Captain Dannett, of the whaler *Prince of Wales*. Franklin had—he himself stated—five years' provisions on board, and told Martin he could make them last seven years, if necessary, with the help of the game which he was sure of procuring.

When 1847 had passed away without tidings from the absent voyagers, some anxiety began to be felt. After a time Sir John Ross expressed his belief the expedition was frozen up to the southwest of Melville's Island. Sir Francis Beaufort, Sir W. E. Parry, Captain Beechy, Captain Sir John Richardson, and Captain Sir James C. Ross, were nearly of the same opinion, and thought that Franklin, if obliged to quit his ship, would try to make his way, by an unknown interval, to the Mackenzie or Coppermine, on the continent. Dr. McCormack and Captain Penny spoke of Wellington Channel and Jones's Sound; but the former authorities greatly relied, in forming their conclusions, on the orders of the Admiralty, which a British officer is strictly bound to respect. These orders were, that Sir John should endeavor, in the first instance, to proceed towards Behring's Straits, in a southwesterly direction from Cape Walker, and the alternative, in case the way should be closed, was an attempt through the opening of Wellington Channel. In the spring of 1848, Sir James C. Ross was sent with the *Enterprise* and Investigator to Lancaster Sound. He found a barrier across Wellington Channel, and a vast quantity of ice in Barrow's Straits. He wintered in the harbor of Port Leopold, where the Straits, Regent's Inlet, Wellington Channel, and the Western opening made a cross or sort of northern *Quatre Bras*. The winter was passed in southerly explorings. With Lieutenant McClintock, Sir James explored the west coast of North Somerset, and Lieutenant Robinson examined the western shore of Regent's Inlet beyond Fury Beach. Before quitting his quarters, Sir James built a house at Port Leopold, leaving there fuel and provisions for twelve months. He then made his way into Lancaster Sound, and, on the 5th of November, 1849, reported himself at the Admiralty, having missed the *Norla Star* which had been sent out to him with instructions to attempt the passage through Wellington Channel.

In 1848, Sir John Richardson again pro-

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ceeded from the Hudson Bay stations to the Arctic Sea, and explored the coast between the mouths of the Mackenzie and Coppermine, and also part of Wollaston's Land, in the hope of finding some trace of the missing expedition; but in vain. In the same year the Plover, Captain Moore, and the Herald, Captain Kellett, went up through Behring's Straits with the purpose of intercepting Franklin's party should it have passed through the archipelago southwest of Cape Walker. On this station the Plover has remained, co-operating with other ships, and sending out exploring parties occasionally. In 1850, Lieut. Pullen of the Plover journeyed to the mouth of the Mackenzie, and so eastward to Point Bathurst, whence he attempted to go to Banks' Land—that unvisited land seen from the coasts of Parry's Islands. But he failed; and in 1851 he returned to the Mackenzie River.

The North Star, sent out in 1849 with instructions for Sir James C. Ross, wintered in Wolstenholme Sound, in Baffin's Bay, and returned to Spithead in September, 1850, after having seen in Lancaster Sound the large squadron sent in that year to look for the lost expedition. The movements of this squadron must be fresh in the minds of most of our readers. Captain Austin's ships, the Resolute and Assistance, with their tenders, went from England in May, 1850. In the same month, Mr. Grinnell's ships, the Advance and Rescue, under De Haven and Griffin, proceeded to the north. Captain Penny carried up his two ships, the Lady Franklin and the Sophia; the veteran, Sir John Ross, went in the Felix, and Captain Forsyth in the Prince Albert. In August, all these ships were in Lancaster Sound and Barrow's Straits, or the adjoining waters. On the 13th of that month, Captain Ommamney—Austin's second in command—and Sir John Ross heard from Eskimos in Barrow's Straits that two ships were crushed off Cape Dudley Digges, and the crews afterwards killed—in the winter of 1846—by the natives. But this report was owing to a misconception of the Eskimo language. On the 23d of August, Captain Ommamney, and, a few days later, Captain Penny, found traces of the missing squadron on Point Riley and Beechy Island, at the opening of Wellington Channel. These were a small guide-board attached to a boarding-pike eight feet long, and bearing an index pointing the way to the ships, a wooden anvil block, some remnants of rope and clothes, several hundred empty meat-cannisters, and, above all, the graves of three men of the squadron: John Hartnell, and William Baine, of the Erebus, and John Torrington, of the Terror.

Three headstones, with inscriptions, marked these graves, and the dates were from January to April, 1846. Captain Austin's ships wintered southwest of Cornwallis Island. Several officers on foot rounded the west end of Melville Island, in longitude 114° west, and saw land beyond the 116th meridian. The intermediate bays and passages were also explored. On the south of Barrow's Straits Captain Ommamney, Lieutenant Osborne, Meecham, and Browne—at a season when the cold was 70° below zero, and spirits froze in bottles—traced Cape Walker and the adjoining straits to within 180 miles of Victoria Land.

Captain Penny's ships explored part of Wellington Channel. He saw three blue openings to the west from that channel—the north and east being closed with ice. He perceived a strong current running from the westward, and it was his opinion, and that of all who accompanied him, that the prevailing winds were from the northwest. He attempted to send a party in that direction, under Mr. Stuart, but it was stopped by the water, which could be seen stretching on to the horizon. Penny asserts there is a great amount of animal life in this region—four-footed, feathery, and finny—walruses, seals, whales, bears, hares, foxes, wolves, reindeer herds, flocks of king and eider ducks, brent, geese, gulls, and other water-fowl. It should be observed that the walrus can exist but where there is open water, in which it may rise for air.

Captain Forsyth, in the Prince Albert, made a rapid run to the Arctic circle and back to England in the space of four months. He went through Lancaster Sound, and on to the Fury Beach, in Regent's Inlet. Finding great obstructions to any further progress westwardly, he went up Wellington Channel, and, returning quickly, brought home the news of the relics on Beechy Island. By this time the chief points in Lancaster Sound and Barrow's Straits had been examined, and also the farther end of Melville Island beyond Cape Walker, without revealing any traces of Sir John Franklin and his crews.

The American ships, so generously missioned by Mr. Grinnell on this fraternal errand, were caught in the ice in Lancaster Sound, borne up Wellington Channel, then back again, and out through Lancaster Sound into Baffin's Bay—a drift of 1060 miles during 267 days! Having at last extricated his ships, De Haven again proceeded to confront the deadly difficulties of the search, but was checked by the ice, and obliged reluctantly to return to New-York in October, 1851.

While all these ships were exploring

the Arctic labyrinth on the east, the *Enterprise* and *Investigator*, commanded by Captains Collinson and McClure, were endeavoring to make their way from the west. They reached Behring's Straits in 1850, with the purpose of trying to approach Melville Island. They have not yet been able to carry out that object. Along with the *Plover*, they were still, when last heard from, laboring and lingering amidst these Arctic wildernesses they have already spent so much time in exploring, in the still deferred hope of meeting with the missing mariners.

After the return of the eastern squadron of 1850, public opinion underwent a change in respect of the unknown movements of Sir John Franklin; and it was believed, as it still is, that he must have gone up to the northwest, through Wellington Channel. He spent the winter of 1845-6—as we now know—on Beechy Island, and, also the succeeding summer, as has been concluded from the deep ruts left in the ground by sledges, and from small patches of garden ground, bordered with purple saxifrages and planted with native plants. Much astonishment has been expressed that Franklin did not bury some record of his movements and intentions, and indicate where they may be looked for. Sir John Richardson, to account for this, says that instead of burying one of those copper cylinders with which he was provided, Franklin, knowing there was no resort of natives to that place, would hang it conspicuously on a tree or a post, the sooner to meet the eyes of explorers. But Richardson says this would not preserve it, for bears and wolverines climb trees and posts, and tear down any packages that may be attached to them. A *dépôt*, carefully formed by Lieutenant Griffith, on Griffith Island, was entirely eaten by the bears—the tin cases proving a poor defence against their tusks. They also overthrew a sign-post, and bit off the end of the metal cylinder containing the record. Richardson, therefore, thinks that Sir John Franklin might have left a cylinder containing notices attached to the sign-post which Penny found flat on the ground, or to some other object, and that the bears or wolverines might have pulled down and destroyed it.

Be this as it may, the search for Sir John Franklin has not ceased. In 1851, Dr. Rae was again sent from the Great Bear Lake towards the sea, for the exploration of the coast and the shore of Wollaston Land. In the same year, Lady Franklin—more steadily hopeful than the Ithacan wife of old—sent the *Prince Albert*, Captain Kennedy again into the Arctic circle. Meeting the returning American ships, Kennedy

pushed on through Barrow's Straits, desiring, like Forsyth in the preceding year, to examine Regent's Inlet. But the ice was so thick he could not enter it. At Port Leopold he was separated, along with a small party, from his ship, and, drifting away on the ice, was recovered with difficulty. A floe of ice then bore the *Prince Albert* down the inlet, where, on the western shore, the voyagers wintered at Batty Bay. From this place Captain Kennedy and Mr. Ballot proceeded, on the 1st of April, with sledges round Melville Bay, and following Brentford Bay to the west, discovered that it was a new channel, which they believed to be the looked-for passage. Passing round, they proceeded to Cape Walker, on North Somerset, and so eastward to Port Leopold, whence, after a journey of 1200 miles in two months, they reached the ship in Batty Bay. No trace of Franklin was found; but the *Prince Albert* brought home last October some interesting news nevertheless. Passing up into Barrow's Straits, in August, 1852, Captain Kennedy reached Beechy Island on the 19th of that month, and there found Captain Pullen in the *North Star*, at Erebus Bay, who told him Sir Edward Belcher, in the *Assistance*, had started up Wellington Channel on the 14th, and Captain Kellett, of the *Resolute*, had gone westwardly to Melville Island and the south of Parry's Islands, to deposit there provisions and other necessities for Collinson and McClure's expedition, should it reach so far from Behring's Straits. Belcher's squadron had been sent from England in the spring of last year, Sir Edward's chief instructions being to attempt the passage by Wellington Channel. In his absence, the *North Star* remained at Beechy Island as a *dépôt*.

Research seems to have taken the right track after all; and the failures of the last three years were necessary to indicate it. The world is anxiously waiting to hear the result of Sir Edward's bold voyage, favored as it has been by a season of great openness. Captain Kennedy says that the sea was open to the north of Wellington Channel when the *Assistance* went up, and thus restores the credit of Captain Penny (whose announcement of open water in that direction had been somewhat doubted), while it inspires a strong hope that something may now be effected. Captain Pullen, writing to the Admiralty on the 23d of August, says the voyagers had parted in high spirits, and with every hope of success. He adds, that from the summit of Beechy Island he had looked up Wellington Channel and to the westward, and had seen water with very little ice. Later accounts have been received from

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Sir Edward's ship in Wellington Channel, to the effect that the expedition had seen, floating down past them, the remains of whales, bears, and other animal substances, which led them to the conclusion that animal life was plenty in that region, and to the belief that the floating objects were the remains of what had been used for human food. When Captain Kennedy spoke of these facts to Captain Penny, at Aberdeen, the latter expressed an energetic opinion that if Sir Edward Belcher's expedition were properly pushed forward, it would come out at Behring's Straits.

Sir Edward does not think that Sir John Franklin hurried away from Beechy Island. In a letter to the Admiralty of the 14th of last August, he says, that, on reaching Beechy Island, he proceeded with service parties to examine the place and the adjacent coasts for some record of the missing expedition. After a laborious search, including the lines of direction of the head-boards of the graves, and at ten feet distance, no trace, not even a scratch on the paint, could be discerned. He thinks Sir John had no intention of leaving a record at that place. Among the reasons occurring to him for such a belief is, that Sir John would not think it a likely place for inquiry; that he would place his beacon on Cape Riley, or some more prominent and accessible position. Lieutenant Hamilton, belonging to the expedition, speaks of some other tokens of the missing mariners, found at Caswell's Tower, on Beechy Island: "On searching, we discovered several of Goldner's preserved-meat cases, seven or eight wine bottles, a fireplace, and a small well, the bottom of which was lined with small stones. A path-way of large flat stones led to the well. No cairns or documents were found. These articles evidently belonged to some of Franklin's parties—most probably a shooting party.

Last year the Isabel, screw steamer, Captain Inglefield, partly fitted out by Lady Franklin, went to the head of Baffin's Bay, and entered Whale Sound on the eastern side. By this inlet the captain believed he had entered the Great Polar Basin, when the violence of the gales checked his progress, and compelled him to return. He then crossed over to the western side of the bay, and entered Jones's Sound as far as the 84th degree of longitude, and then returned. After visiting Belcher's squadron at Beechy Island, he came to England towards the close of the year.

We perceive that the Isabel has resumed her search this year, under the orders of Captain Kennedy, who will proceed to Behring's Straits to aid or look for

the expedition of Captains Collinson and McClure. The latter have been near five years in those dreary labyrinths waiting on the shifting chances of that treacherous region, and expecting those who never come. Indeed, it is not impossible that, at this moment, the Enterprise and Investigator are in the predicament of the Erebus and Terror—in want of the succor which they went so far to convey!

America, also, sends out one more expedition in search of the missing ships. Dr. E. R. Kane, in the Advance, goes up to the Arctic circle. He proposes to make the starting-point of his search Smith's Sound, or some convenient station in the head waters of Baffin's Bay—over two hundred miles further to the north than Beechy Island. Thence, accompanied by a small party with a couple of sledges drawn by dogs, he will undertake an overland pilgrimage westward, in the direction of the Polar Basin. He expects the co-operation of the Danish authorities in removing any difficulties of the preparatory arrangements, and procuring the assistance of such Eskimos as he may need. Each sledge will carry an India-rubber boat on a basket of wicker-work. The doctor has carefully superintended the pemmican, the biscuit, the condensed milk, and dessicated vegetables, and all those gastronomic resources on which the intrepid little party must mainly rely. Hoping to reach the starting-place in the early season of navigation, he intends to follow his course of travel nearly upon a meridional line, which would, it is believed, lead him to the Polynya—a *mare liberum*, or such, comparatively speaking—within its formidable borderings of the thick-ribbed ice. Mr. Grinnell has again generously given his good ship, the Advance, fully equipped, for this chivalrous charity; and the doctor has had his enterprise encouraged by autograph letters from the venerable Baron Humboldt, the Nestor of science and philosophy, Sir Francis Beaufort, Colonel Sabine, Captains Parry, Ross, and other distinguished men.

Meantime the expedition under Sir Edward Belcher, now following the track which the world believes Franklin took, gives, we repeat, good hope of arriving at something more concerning the missing ships. But the hope that Sir John Franklin is still alive is not so strongly entertained as heretofore. Between seven and eight years is a long time to spend within the dreary Arctic circle. Sir John Ross has given it as his opinion that even if Franklin's expedition had been able to procure food enough, they could scarcely survive six winters in the Arctic regions. Capt. Ommaney thinks Sir John and his

crew have all perished, seeing that the supply of birds and animals in the North cannot be depended on for more than two months in the year. He also supposes that the meat in the tin cannisters may have been found unfit to eat—a dreary and a terrible idea! But the opinions of other good authorities give ground for hope. Dr. Scoresby, with the arctic experience of half a century, thinks some portion of the crews may still survive, inextricably beset in the ice. Captain Kellett of the *Resolute*, now under Belcher in the North, says it is not right or proper to conclude the crews are dead, and thinks they will be found farther west than any explorers have yet reached. Sir John Richardson also thinks that part of the crew, at least, may still be alive to the north or northwest of Melville Island—seeing that life may be supported for many years on the land and water animals that haunt the most northern regions known. Captain Penny is of the same opinion. Mr. Petermann also believes a portion of the crews may still be safe, and so does Captain Inglefield. Most of these authorities quoted, believe Sir John went up through Wellington Channel. Captains Austin, Ommaney, and Osborne of the royal expedition of 1850 lean however, to the opinion that Franklin did not go northward through that channel. Austin still supposes he would proceed beyond Cape Walker, according to his instructions; Ommaney does not think Sir John prosecuted his research beyond Beechy Island; and Lieut. Osborne thinks he tried to enter the Polynya from Baffin's Bay, north of Lancaster Sound, where animal life is more plenty than elsewhere. But the general belief is, that Franklin has gone up to reach that Polar sea which he may have seen from Beechy Island, and which he must have strongly believed in, before he began his voyage at all. About a year before he started, his friend Col. Sabine, published, in London, a translation, from the German, of the Russian Admiral Von Wrangell's *Journeys in 1820 over the ice of the polar sea, from Nijnei Kolymsk. In this Wrangell speaks of a great Polynya* (open space), lying from thirty to fifty miles north of Kotelnoi and New Siberia, and thence in a direct line, at about the same distance from the continent, between Chelagaskoi and Cape North. He also alludes to the north and north-east winds, and northwest winds that damped the clothes of his party, proving, he says, that an open watery space exists to the north. Col. Sabine in his preface to the translation says: (and these sentences must have passed under the eyes

of Franklin, and often influenced the current of his thoughts), "every attempt which he (Von W.) made to proceed to the North repeated as these were during three years (1820–23), and from many points of a line several hundred miles, in an easterly and western direction terminated alike in conducting them to an open and navigable sea. After an ice-journey of more or less continuance, they arrived where farther progress in sledges was impossible, where, to use the words of Von Wrangell. "they beheld the wide immeasurable ocean spread before their gaze, a fearful and magnificent but to them, a melancholy spectacle." Wrangle was of opinion that this Polynya extended, unless land intervened, all the way round to Spitzbergen. The repeated failures of the English explorers to go to the West, beyond the last mark of Parry, by way of a lower latitude, must have prepared the mind of Franklin to receive these Russian opinions and statements with something like strong conviction; and he doubtless took with him to the North, the determination to look for the Polynya. This was, indeed the alternative of his Admiralty instructions; and furthermore, it may be observed that they who were most intimate with Sir John and his friend, Fitzjames, well knew that the thoughts of both reverted to the Polar Basin more strongly than in any other direction.

Franklin did not contemplate a hasty return; he seemed to look forward to a longer stay in the North than people supposed. In a letter written home, a fortnight before he was last seen, he says, to Col. Sabine: "I hope my dear wife and daughter will not be over anxious if we should not return by the time they have fixed upon; for you know well that even after the second winter, without success in an object, we should wish to try some other channel, if the state of our provisions and the health of our crew justify it." There is still stronger evidence that he did not intend to come down in a hurry. Capt. Martin of the whaler *Enterprise*, the last to communicate with Sir John, says (his letter appeared in the *London Times*), that Franklin told him he was fairly provisioned for five years, but that, if necessary, he could make his stores last for seven. Capt. Martin also saw the crews of the two ships busily engaged in salting down birds of which they had several casks full, and he says that twelve men were, at the same time, employed in shooting more. Capt. Penny says, Martin is a man of fortune and of strict integrity. That shooting and salting game shows a very *deliberate purpose* on the part of Franklin—and while it

proves such food convicted posed to birds ce This len nya; and many a surance Capt. P graphica ago, as twelve last year Davis' S an amo Franklin sisted de And Dr safety o supply o says in e region ev of huma than th Narwhal latter in waters o is a regic migration goose, an of our t The fat known heat, the clothing, scorbutic and the bers eve tained." Still, t ture, inc inclines —no on any men astonishi greater p Allowing Sir John voracity that no Beechy extraord proceed ker, it w no men wintered gent's In expected his pres points, v have fou

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proves that he would greatly depend on such food, it inevitably leads us to the conviction that he would be greatly disposed to direct his movements with reference to those places where animals and birds could be had in most abundance. This leads our beliefs towards the Polynya; and it is a consolation to think of the many authorities which give us the assurance of its capacity of furnishing food. Capt. Penny mentioned before the Geographical Society of London, a few months ago, as something encouraging, that twelve American seamen, who wintered last year in an inlet discovered by him in Davis' Straits, had killed twelve whales—an amount of food he says "on which Franklin and his crews might have subsisted during the time they were absent!" And Dr. Kane is equally hopeful of the safety of Sir John with respect to the supply of food. "The resources"—he says in one of his lectures—"which that region evidently possesses for the support of human life, are surprisingly greater than the public are generally aware. Narwhal, white whales, and seals—the latter in extreme abundance—crowd the waters of Wellington Channel; indeed it is a region teeming with animal life. The migrations of the eider duck, the brent goose, and the auk—a bird about the size of our teal, were absolutely wonderful. The fatty envelope of marine animals, known as blubber, supplies light and heat, their furs warm and well-adapted clothing, their flesh wholesome and antiscorbutic food. The reindeer, the bear, and the fox, also abound in great numbers even in the highest latitude attained."

Still, though every feeling of our nature, independently of reasons advanced, inclines us to hope Franklin is still alive—no one can deny that the absence of any memorial of his movements is most astonishing and unaccountable. The greater portion of the mystery is in *this*! Allowing there may be something in what Sir John Richardson says of the cunning voracity of bears and wolverines; still, that no direct notice should be found on Beechy Island or Cape Riley, is most extraordinary. Even if Franklin were to proceed to the West, towards Cape Walker, it would be strange he should leave no memorial in the place where he had wintered. If he had gone towards Regent's Inlet or Banks' Land, it would be expected he would deposit some token of his presence on some of the prominent points, where the explorers of 1850 must have found them. The result of their re-

searches, in fact, shows that, in all human probability, Franklin never went westward from Wellington Channel. With respect to Beechy Island, Capt. Kennedy and others believe that, after all, some memorials of the intrepid navigator lie buried in the ground, though they cannot be come at. But, then, it is scarcely probable that Franklin would bury his intimations in a manner to baffle those who may come after him. Conjecture is bewildered by the facts, arguments, and conclusions that may be gathered from this mysterious question. All that can be said, apparently, is that the balance of probabilities points to the way, north-west from Wellington Channel, as that pursued in 1846, by the *Erebus* and *Terror*.

As we have said—the enterprise of Sir Edward Belcher excites the strongest interest, and the world is in daily expectation of hearing some news from North Channel, Queen's Channel, or other waterways into the Polynya. It will be a dreary and disheartening thing if Belcher comes down without tidings or token of the lost mariners. He is more likely to meet a memorial of the ships than the ships themselves; for, if they enter that region, they should be far to the westward by this time, and above that outlying circle of ice which resisted the efforts of the *Plover*, *Enterprise* and *Investigator* to pierce it. Altogether, the fate of Franklin is covered with uncertainty as with a thick cloud. No doubt, there are those who dream of the day when he may come down from the cold Polynya, to send a thrill of joy and congratulation through the length and breadth of the civilized world. But others, with Ommaney and Stewart (Penny's captain) dread the worst, and think that British-born crews could not survive six winters in the arctic circle. Still, hope is not killed. Sir John Ross spent four winters in the ice, and came out safe; though he was forced to quit his single ship, the *Victory*. Sir John Franklin's expedition was well equipped and furnished; his ships were stout, and his determination to make some decisive westing was very strong. His case does not yet seem desperate; and we wait with anxiety, the result of efforts at present made in the Polar wilderness—efforts that will still be repeated till the fate of the lost navigator and his companions shall be discovered, or all reasonable hope of ever bringing it to light shall be extinguished.